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C.I.A. Changes Spy Operations After Iran Loss

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WASHINGTON, Feb. 1 — United States intelligence-gathering activities are increasingly being conducted under the cover of private commercial organizations rather than diplomatic missions, according to senior intelligence officials.

The officials said the change was made in an effort to tighten security after the loss of sensitive documents when the American Embassy in Teheran was seized in 1979.

Approaches to Bani-Sadr Cited

The officials said this new procedure, initiated by William J. Casey, director of Central Intelligence, resulted from the intelligence community's concern over the public disclosures of secret contacts with Iranian officials and of detailed American assessments of the Iranian situation that followed the takeover.

The documents were obtained by Iranian militants when they seized the embassy on Nov. 4, 1979. They were subsequently published in Iran in a 13-volume series of paperback books, copies of which have now reached newspapers in the United States.

Information in the documents ranges from accounts of Central Intelligence

Agency efforts to recruit Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, then a close adviser to Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, to a 47-page C.I.A. study of Israel's intelligence and security services.

That study reveals that the Israelis placed listening devices in American diplomatic offices in Israel in the 1950's and 1960's and attempted to blackmail an American consular official in Jerusalem to obtain information.

The intelligence officials said that Mr. Casey, who took office at the start of the Reagan Administration, had placed a high priority on establishing commercial cover for agents and operations, either by gaining the cooperation of American corporations operating abroad or by creating fictitious companies for the purpose.

Mr. Casey was also reported to have ordered that the amount of intelligence data stored overseas be reduced.

"We used to keep encyclopedic files in a lot of stations, including Iran," one intelligence official said. "That was a mistake. We're now trying to keep files to a minimum."

In addition, the C.I.A. has asked the State Department to restrict the circulation of intelligence data in foreign posts, the officials said. Much of the material lost in Iran, they said, was found in files kept by embassy personnel, including L. Bruce Laingen, the chargé d'affaires. At the time of the takeover, an effort was made to burn or shred sensitive information, but the militants were able to recover considerable quantities of documents and were also able to reconstruct shredded materials.

The documents, which were published in Iran and made available here, disclosed, among other things, that in the days before the seizure of the embassy, the Iranian Government, then headed by a moderate, Prime Minister Mehdi Barzagan, established contacts with

American intelligence agents to seek information on whether Iraq was fomenting the insurrection of the Kurdish minority and whether Israel was also involved.

According to the documents, the C.I.A. made contact with Mr. Bani-Sadr, who was then a close adviser to Ayatollah Khomeini and later was to become President of Iran, in an effort to recruit him. But the mission, which involved the use of a secret agent using an alias, produced only modest information about the political situation in revolutionary Iran. The attempt to recruit Mr. Bani-Sadr as an agent failed.

Deportation of Shah Urged

After the deposed Shah Mohammed Riza Pahlavi was admitted to the United States for medical reasons in October 1979, the publications reveal, various Iranian officials pleaded with the United States Embassy to deport him for fear that his presence in America would be used by radicals to destroy any chances of improved Iranain-American relations. Mr. Laingen himself had strongly urged against admitting the Shah to the United States.

In 1977, the documents show, the C.I.A. complained in a report that too much credence was given to information supplied by the Iranian intelligence service, Savak.

The public release of the documents, which include the minutes of embassy meetings conducted by Ambassador William H. Sullivan, the last envoy to Teheran, seemed designed to put Iranian moderates and other opponents of the religious factions in the worst possible light.

For example, there is considerable documentation to show that American intelligence agents had contacts with Abbas Amir Entezam, who was Deputy Prime Minister and official spokesman for Mr. Bazargan, whose Government fell in the aftermath of the takeover of the American Embassy.

Mr. Entezam was appointed ambassador to Sweden just before the Bazar-

gan Government fell on Nov. 6, 1979 and later was tried on charges that included collaboration with the C.I.A. Last June the official Iranian press agency said a revolutionary court had sentenced him to life imprisonment.

Mr. Entezam is not named in the documents, but in the context seems to fit the description of a C.I.A. contact known in the cablegrams to Washington as "SDPLOD/1."

Mr. Entezam and Foreign Minister Ibrahim Yazdi both appeared to have been particularly concerned about Iraq's activities, given the traditional enmity between that nation and Iran.

A document says that on Oct. 18, 1979, "SDPLOD/1" met with an American known by the code name of "Adlesick" to tell him that Iran's needs "at the moment were basically for tactical information on Kurdish situation and political intelligence on who supporting Kurds and why."